



# News Release

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## **Mother's Day is coming: "text4baby" improves health of moms and babies**

*Free service for pregnant women and new mothers*

**OLYMPIA** — Health decisions made by pregnant women and new moms affect the health of their babies for a lifetime. The Department of Health is joining others this Mother's Day to encourage women to sign-up for free text messages about their pregnancy and infant health.

[Text4baby](#), the country's first free, health information texting program provides tips and expert advice sent directly to cell phones. The program is sponsored by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Johnson & Johnson, and others. Women can get started by texting "BABY" (or "BEBE" for Spanish) to 511411. Once they sign up, they'll get weekly text messages timed to their due date or their baby's birth date through the baby's first year.

"Text4baby is a great tool to reach moms in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with health information," said State Health Officer Dr. Maxine Hayes, a pediatrician. "The important information that moms get through this program will help babies get a healthier start on life."

Here's one example of a text4baby message: "Before you take any over-the-counter or prescription medicine or pills, ask your doctor if it's safe for you & your baby. Call 866-626-6847 for info."

Washington is one of several states participating in a national contest intended to double the number of women enrolled in text4baby. This contest starts May 10 and the winner will be announced in October.

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Visit the Washington Department of Health website at <http://www.doh.wa.gov> for a healthy dose of information.